

to Yugoslavia in accordance with this section. Such assistance would be provided at such time as the President determines that the Government of Yugoslavia is committed to democratic principles and the rule of law and respects internationally recognized human rights.

(2) **STRATEGY.**—The plan developed under paragraph (1) shall include a strategy for distributing assistance to Yugoslavia under the plan.

(3) **DIPLOMATIC EFFORTS.**—The President shall take the necessary steps—

(A) to seek to obtain the agreement of other countries and international financial institutions and other multilateral organizations to provide assistance to Yugoslavia after the President determines that the Government of Yugoslavia is committed to democratic principles, the rule of law, and that respects internationally recognized human rights; and

(B) to work with such countries, institutions, and organizations to coordinate all such assistance programs.

(4) **COMMUNICATION OF PLAN.**—The President shall take the necessary steps to communicate to the people of Yugoslavia the plan for assistance developed under this section.

(5) **REPORT.**—Not later than 120 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the President shall transmit to the appropriate congressional committees a report describing in detail the plan required to be developed by paragraph (1).

#### FREEDOM TO E-FILE ACT

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Agriculture Committee be discharged from further consideration of S. 777, and the Senate then proceed to its immediate consideration.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The clerk will report the bill by title.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 777) to require the Department of Agriculture to establish an electronic filing and retrieval system to enable the public to file all required paperwork electronically with the Department and to have access to public information on farm programs, quarterly trade, economic, and production reports, and other similar information.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the bill.

AMENDMENT NO. 2513

(Purpose: To provide a complete substitute)

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, there is a substitute amendment at the desk submitted by Senator FITZGERALD.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

The Senator from Iowa (Mr. GRASSLEY), FOR MR. FITZGERALD, proposes an amendment numbered 2513.

Strike all after the enacting clause and insert the following:

#### SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the "Freedom to E-File Act".

#### SEC. 2. ELECTRONIC FILING AND RETRIEVAL.

(a) **IN GENERAL.**—Not later than 180 days after the date of enactment of this Act, in accordance with subsection (c), the Secretary of Agriculture (referred to in this Act

as the "Secretary") shall, to the maximum extent practicable, establish an Internet-based system that enables agricultural producers to access all forms of the agencies of the Department of Agriculture specified in subsection (b).

(b) **APPLICABILITY.**—The agencies referred to in subsection (a) are—

- (1) the Farm Service Agency;
- (2) the Rural Utilities Service;
- (3) the Rural Housing Service;
- (4) the Rural Business-Cooperative Service; and
- (5) the Natural Resources Conservation Service.

(c) **IMPLEMENTATION.**—In carrying out subsection (a), the Secretary shall—

(1) provide a method by which agricultural producers may—

- (A) download forms from the Internet; and
- (B) submit completed forms via electronic facsimile, mail, or similar means;

(2) redesign forms of the agencies of the Department of Agriculture by incorporating into the forms user-friendly formats and self-help guidance materials.

(d) **PROGRESS REPORTS.**—Not later than 180 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall submit to Congress a report that describes the progress made toward implementing the Internet-based system required under this section.

#### SEC. 3. ACCESSING INFORMATION AND FILING OVER THE INTERNET.

(a) **IN GENERAL.**—Not later than 2 years after the date of enactment of this Act, in accordance with subsection (b), the Secretary shall expand implementation of the Internet-based system established under section 2 by enabling agricultural producers to access and file all forms and, at the option of the Secretary, selected records and information of the agencies of the Department specified in section 2(b).

(b) **IMPLEMENTATION.**—In carrying out subsection (a), the Secretary shall ensure that an agricultural producer is able—

(1) to file electronically or in paper form, at the option of the agricultural producer, all forms required by agencies of the Department specified in section 2(b);

(2) to file electronically or in paper form, at the option of the agricultural producer, all documentation required by agencies of the Department specified in section 2(b) and determined appropriate by the Secretary; and

(3) to access information concerning farm programs, quarterly trade, economic, and production reports, and other similar production agriculture information that is readily available to the public in paper form.

#### SEC. 4. FEDERAL CROP INSURANCE CORPORATION AND RISK MANAGEMENT AGENCY.

(a) **IN GENERAL.**—Not later than December 1, 2000, the Federal Crop Insurance Corporation and the Risk Management Agency shall submit to the Committee on Agriculture of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry of the Senate a plan, that is consistent with this Act, to allow agricultural producers to—

- (1) obtain, over the Internet, from approved insurance providers all forms and other information concerning the program under the jurisdiction of the Corporation and Agency in which the agricultural producer is a participant; and
- (2) file electronically all paperwork required for participation in the program.

(b) **ADMINISTRATION.**—The plan shall—

- (1) conform to sections 2(c) and 3(b); and

(2) prescribe—

(A) the location and type of data to be made available to agricultural producers;

(B) the location where agricultural producers can electronically file their paperwork; and

(C) the responsibilities of the applicable parties, including agricultural producers, the Risk Management Agency, the Federal Crop Insurance Corporation, approved insurance providers, crop insurance agents, and brokers.

(c) **IMPLEMENTATION.**—Not later than December 1, 2001, the Federal Crop Insurance Corporation and the Risk Management Agency shall complete implementation of the plan submitted under subsection (a).

#### SEC. 5. CONFIDENTIALITY.

In carrying out this Act, the Secretary—

(1) may not make available any information over the Internet that would otherwise not be available for release under section 552 or 552a of title 5, United States Code; and

(2) shall ensure, to the maximum extent practicable, that the confidentiality of persons is maintained.

Mr. FITZGERALD. Mr. President, I rise today to urge passage of S. 777, the Freedom to E-File Act. I appreciate Agriculture Secretary Glickman, Agriculture Committee Chairman LUGAR and my other Colleagues on the Agriculture Committee for their hard work in helping craft the consensus substitute amendment being offered on the floor today. This legislation will streamline the process our farmers follow when filing paper work with the Department of Agriculture (USDA). Currently, when farmers are required to fill out USDA paper work, they are required to travel to their local USDA county offices, complete the paper work, wait in long lines and file these documents in paper form. This process is very inefficient and time consuming.

This bill simply requires USDA to develop a system for farmers to access and file this information over the internet. The "Freedom to E-file Act" simply makes good common sense. As our society has become more technologically advanced so have our farmers. In fact, a 1998 Novartis survey found that over 72 percent of all farmers with 500 acres or more had personal computers. Overall, over fifty percent of all farmers surveyed had computers.

According to a Farm Journal study entitled, "AgWeb 1999: Internet and e-Commerce in Production Agriculture," farmer internet usage will have more than doubled by the end of 1999 compared to 1997. The author concluded, "the computer and the internet have become just as important to farmers as the tractor and good weather." The bill we pass today clearly recognizes this reality. The study also notes that over two-thirds of all commercial farmers own at least one computer and these farmers spend at least two hours per week on average utilizing the internet for agricultural purposes.

Our agriculturists use computers not only for financial management and market information but for sophisticated precision agriculture management systems. These sophisticated

small business owners could easily file necessary farm program paperwork from their homes and offices if only this option was available.

Farmers are often frustrated with the long lines at county USDA offices, especially during their most hectic times such as harvest season. Our nation's farmers are clearly overburdened by government-mandated paperwork. This bill is the first step in the right direction toward regulatory reform for our U.S. food producers.

The Freedom to E-File Act has been popular among agricultural groups and within the United States Senate. The American Farm Bureau Federation, our nation's largest farm organization, stated that while S. 777 is a simple bill, "the impact it will have on farmers and ranchers should be immense." The bill has approximately twenty bipartisan co-sponsors, including Agriculture Committee Chairman LUGAR and Minority Leader DASCHLE. The Secretary of Agriculture also supports the Freedom to E-File Act.

I commend my colleague, Congressman RAY LAHOOD, for championing the companion to this bill in the House of Representatives. I hope that the House will pass this important legislation prior to the end of this session, and look forward to the President's signature. I thank the presiding officer and I yield the floor.

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the amendment be agreed to, the bill be read a third time and passed, as amended, the motion to reconsider be laid upon the table, and that any statements relating to the bill be printed in the RECORD.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The bill (S. 777), as amended, was read the third time and passed, as follows:

#### S. 777

*Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

#### SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the "Freedom to E-File Act".

#### SEC. 2. ELECTRONIC FILING AND RETRIEVAL.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 180 days after the date of enactment of this Act, in accordance with subsection (c), the Secretary of Agriculture (referred to in this Act as the "Secretary") shall, to the maximum extent practicable, establish an Internet-based system that enables agricultural producers to access all forms of the agencies of the Department of Agriculture specified in subsection (b).

(b) APPLICABILITY.—The agencies referred to in subsection (a) are—

- (1) the Farm Service Agency;
- (2) the Rural Utilities Service;
- (3) the Rural Housing Service;
- (4) the Rural Business-Cooperative Service; and
- (5) the Natural Resources Conservation Service.

(c) IMPLEMENTATION.—In carrying out subsection (a), the Secretary shall—

(1) provide a method by which agricultural producers may—

(A) download forms from the Internet; and

(B) submit completed forms via electronic facsimile, mail, or similar means;

(2) redesign forms of the agencies of the Department of Agriculture by incorporating into the forms user-friendly formats and self-help guidance materials.

(d) PROGRESS REPORTS.—Not later than 180 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall submit to Congress a report that describes the progress made toward implementing the Internet-based system required under this section.

#### SEC. 3. ACCESSING INFORMATION AND FILING OVER THE INTERNET.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 2 years after the date of enactment of this Act, in accordance with subsection (b), the Secretary shall expand implementation of the Internet-based system established under section 2 by enabling agricultural producers to access and file all forms and, at the option of the Secretary, selected records and information of the agencies of the Department specified in section 2(b).

(b) IMPLEMENTATION.—In carrying out subsection (a), the Secretary shall ensure that an agricultural producer is able—

(1) to file electronically or in paper form, at the option of the agricultural producer, all forms required by agencies of the Department specified in section 2(b);

(2) to file electronically or in paper form, at the option of the agricultural producer, all documentation required by agencies of the Department specified in section 2(b) and determined appropriate by the Secretary; and

(3) to access information concerning farm programs, quarterly trade, economic, and production reports, and other similar production agriculture information that is readily available to the public in paper form.

#### SEC. 4. FEDERAL CROP INSURANCE CORPORATION AND RISK MANAGEMENT AGENCY.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than December 1, 2000, the Federal Crop Insurance Corporation and the Risk Management Agency shall submit to the Committee on Agriculture of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry of the Senate a plan, that is consistent with this Act, to allow agricultural producers to—

(1) obtain, over the Internet, from approved insurance providers all forms and other information concerning the program under the jurisdiction of the Corporation and Agency in which the agricultural producer is a participant; and

(2) file electronically all paperwork required for participation in the program.

(b) ADMINISTRATION.—The plan shall—

(1) conform to sections 2(c) and 3(b); and

(2) prescribe—

(A) the location and type of data to be made available to agricultural producers;

(B) the location where agricultural producers can electronically file their paperwork; and

(C) the responsibilities of the applicable parties, including agricultural producers, the Risk Management Agency, the Federal Crop Insurance Corporation, approved insurance providers, crop insurance agents, and brokers.

(c) IMPLEMENTATION.—Not later than December 1, 2001, the Federal Crop Insurance Corporation and the Risk Management Agency shall complete implementation of the plan submitted under subsection (a).

#### SEC. 5. CONFIDENTIALITY.

In carrying out this Act, the Secretary—

(1) may not make available any information over the Internet that would otherwise not be available for release under section 552 or 552a of title 5, United States Code; and

(2) shall ensure, to the maximum extent practicable, that the confidentiality of persons is maintained.

#### TO AMEND THE IMMIGRATION AND NATIONALITY ACT

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate now proceed to consideration of Calendar No. 340, S. 1753.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the bill by title.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 1753) to amend the Immigration and Nationality Act to provide that an adopted alien who is less than 18 years of age may be considered a child under such Act if adopted with or after a sibling who is a child under such Act.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the bill.

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the bill be read a third time, passed, the motion to reconsider be laid upon the table, and that any statements relating to the bill be printed in the RECORD.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The bill (S. 1753) was read the third time and passed, as follows:

#### S. 1753

*Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

#### SECTION 1. PROVIDING THAT AN ADOPTED ALIEN WHO IS LESS THAN 18 YEARS OF AGE MAY BE CONSIDERED A CHILD UNDER THE IMMIGRATION AND NATIONALITY ACT IF ADOPTED WITH OR AFTER A SIBLING WHO IS A CHILD UNDER SUCH ACT.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 101(b)(1) of the Immigration and Nationality Act (8 U.S.C. 1101(b)(1)) is amended—

(1) in subparagraph (E)—

(A) by inserting "(i)" after "(E)"; and

(B) by adding at the end the following:

"(ii) subject to the same proviso as in clause (i), a child who (I) is a natural sibling of a child described in clause (i) or subparagraph (F)(i); (II) was adopted by the adoptive parent or parents of the sibling described in such clause or subparagraph; and (III) is otherwise described in clause (i), except that the child was adopted while under the age of eighteen years; or"; and

(2) in subparagraph (F)—

(A) by inserting "(i) after "(F)";

(B) by striking the period at the end and inserting "; or"; and

(C) by adding at the end the following:

"(ii) subject to the same provisos as in clause (i), a child who (I) is a natural sibling of a child described in clause (i) or subparagraph (E)(i); (II) has been adopted abroad, or is coming to the United States for adoption, by the adoptive parent (or prospective adoptive parent) or parents of the sibling described in such clause or subparagraph; and (III) is otherwise described in clause (i), except that the child is under the age of eighteen at the time a petition is filed in his or her behalf to accord a classification as an immediate relative under section 201(b)."